

Interesting Chat and Stage Gossip for Playgoers

Taking a Leap Into the Past With Miss Ring

Saturn Has Three Rings; "Broadway Whirl" Has One; It Needs No More

By Harriette Underhill

After being sure all day that something was going to happen—it did. We walked into Blanche Ring's dressing room at the Times Square Theater and called her Blanche, and we never had met her. Such a thing never has happened to us before. But did Miss Ring mind? She did not. Perhaps she is used to having strangers greet her like that; for, you know, every one thinks of her as Blanche. Perhaps she realized that we were still under the spell of her first act in "The Broadway Whirl." She must know that she gets people that way, or why do they always want to join in and help her sing her choruses?

"Your slipper is untied; I'll fasten it for you," said Miss Ring as we sat down opposite her in her dressing room, and she made us put our foot up on her \$1,000 seed-pearl, Hickson-covered knee while she tied the ribbon. If you had interviewed as many people as we have you would realize how rare it is to have them meet you as man to man. So many people get funny and up-stage and unnatural and pugnacious. But there is nothing highfalutin about Miss Ring in the dressing room any more than there is on the stage. She is just the same. And so pretty and fresh and sweet—bless her heart!

Back to the Good Old Summer Time

There is something about the Ring sisters, Blanche and Frances, that always strikes a chord that takes us back to the old days of our romances. We never see either of them now without feeling that same way about it. The first time in our life that we felt we were experiencing the grand passion because we were going to the theater and to supper without a chaperon. Amelia Bingham was playing "The Frisky Mrs. Johnson." There was a beautiful young actress in the cast named Frances Ring, and "the man" told us that she was a sister of the famous Blanche, and that he knew them both. "I'll take you back and introduce you after the show," he said. But after the show he said it was so late that if we went back stage we'd miss the train for Passaic. So we didn't go, and I thought about it for years. Knowing "the man" as we now do, we are sure that he didn't know them at all, but in those early times we believe everything.

And Then Again The Same Old Story

And, then, the next time the birds were singing in our heart and we were afflicted with the same set of delusions "the man" took us to see "The Midnight Sons," and we sat in the third row and heard Miss Ring sing "Rings on my fingers and bells on my toes." We were entranced, and again "the man" (not the same one, of course) said, "I know Miss Ring, and I'll take you back stage and introduce you after the show." And again he didn't do it, because it was New Year's Eve, and he said Miss Ring probably had something on. And then we almost met her at a supper party which Tommy Meighan, her brother-in-law, gave at the Ziegfeld Roof, and once again at a luncheon party of Mrs. Sidney Drew's on Delmonico's roof. But never quite until last night. So that is, no doubt, the reason we called her Blanche on sight, because we had almost known her for such a long time.

The Nameless One Makes a Faux Pas

Just as we were telling her how she hadn't changed a bit a nice man with white teeth and black hair whose name we did not catch rushed in for a moment. First he asked if we had wanted a drink of ice cream soda or anything, and then he said: "Blanche, you haven't changed a bit in twenty-five years."

"Heavens," retorted Blanche, "I hope I didn't look like this twenty-five years ago! You mustn't say that. It makes me too old. Make it fifteen or nothing."

"Twenty-five," insisted the black-haired man. "I say you haven't changed in twenty-five years. I insist it is twenty-five years. Where's Tommy Meighan?"

"You've just missed him, unless he's still in Charlie's room." Charlie is Charles Winninger, Miss Ring's husband, and he looks like a jolly sort, although we didn't have the pleasure of meeting him because he was busy dressing. So far as we know he is Miss Ring's only husband, and sister Frances has always been married only to Tommy Meighan. It's quite remarkable!

"I hope you people mean all the nice things you are saying. It does my heart good, and the funny part of it is that I'm just as enthusiastic as I was the first time I ever walked on the stage and sang 'In the Good Old Summer Time.'"

"Was that the first? Well, the first we remember was 'Yip-I-Addy' and 'The Tankee Girl.' Are you going to sing some of the old songs to-night?"

Miss Ring Can Sing The Old Songs

"I never do unless they call for them, and it's so warm to-night they probably won't have the strength to do it."

"Yes, they will," we answered, "for Pearl White is sitting in the box next to us and the two of us could start



in "The High Cost of Loving"

E. Baer Appointed Vice-Conductor of Rivoli Orchestra

Emanuel Baer, who for the last few years has been Hugo Riesenfeld's chief assistant in preparing the musical scores to motion pictures, assumes today the assistant conductorship of the Rivoli orchestra, the organization of fifty musicians of which Frederick Stahlberg is the conductor. Mr. Baer's promotion follows close upon the rise of Joseph Littan from assistant conductor at the Rivoli to conductor of the Rialto orchestra.

Mr. Baer is a native of New York and received his musical education here. At the age of six he began the study of the piano under Palo Gallico, a fellow student with Hugo Riesenfeld at the Vienna Conservatory. He completed his musical studies under Raphael Joseffy and began his professional career as a pianist at the age of fifteen. When the Rialto Theater was opened Mr. Baer was its pianist, and, on occasions, conducted the Rialto orchestra. He soon became assistant to Mr. Riesenfeld in the preparation of special photoplay music.

When the Missouri Theater, the most beautiful photoplay theater in St. Louis, was opened a few months ago Mr. Riesenfeld sent Mr. Baer to that city to supervise the music policy of the playhouse during its first weeks.

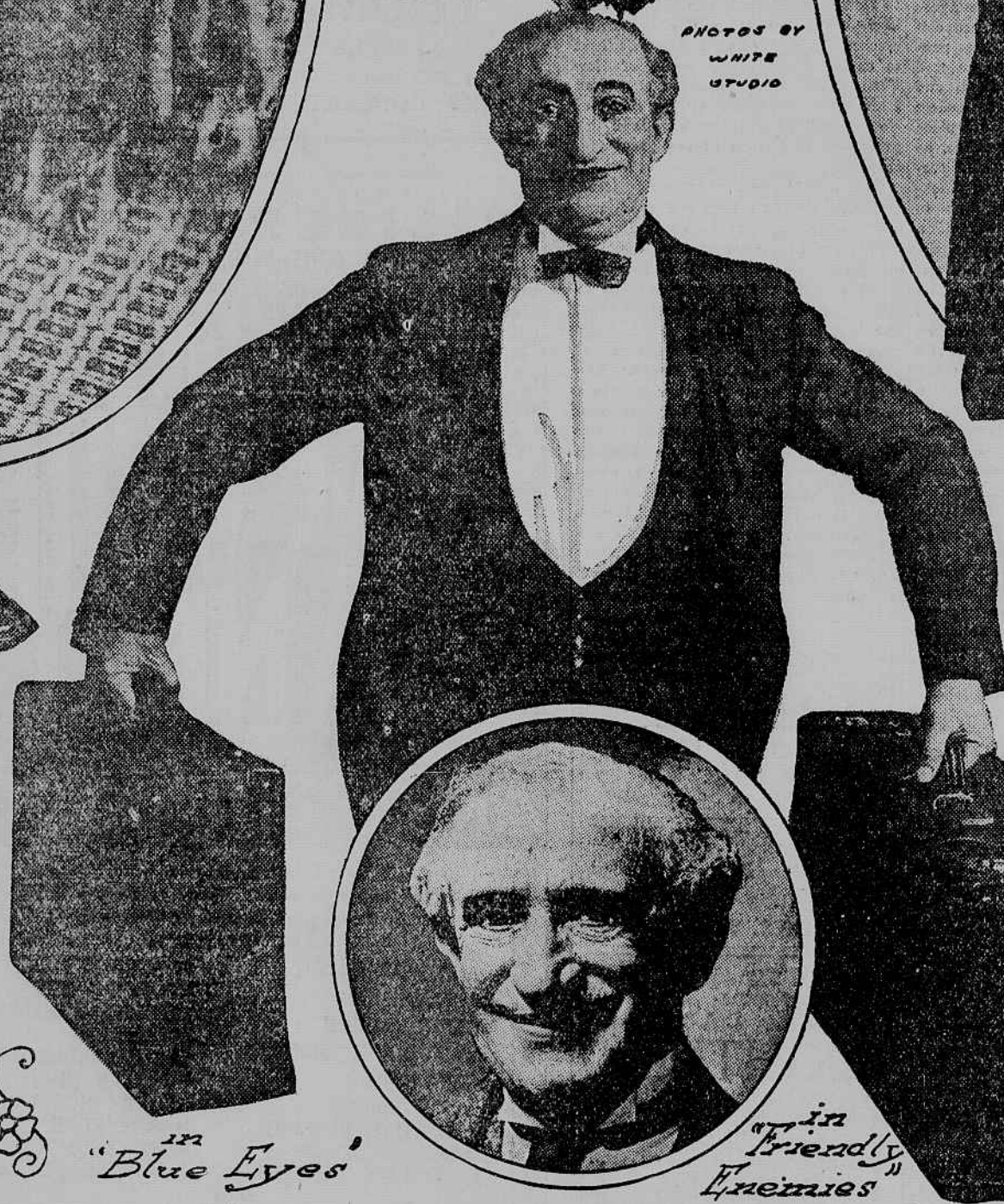
Mr. Baer has a remarkable faculty for playing piano music at sight, and for that reason was called on to play accompaniments for aspiring young singers who attended auditions at the Riesenfeld theaters and could not afford their own pianist. In the course of this work—his contributions to the young vocalists—he has played accompaniments for fully 5,000 singers. He has also played every piece of music which was later heard at the Rialto, Rivoli and Criterion theaters. The entire music program of each of the three theaters has been played by Mr. Baer on the piano, so that in arranging the programs with Mr. Riesenfeld the full musical significance, from the elaborate music setting of a photoplay to the humblest solo, could be harmonized.

anything," and then Miss Ring sang "Care Free Cairo Town," and before we could even let out a peep some one in the balcony called out, "Rings on My Fingers," and so Miss Ring gave it to them, and then when she had finished that some one called, "Yip-I-Addy," and she sang that with the congregation coming in strong on the "Yips." And then the curtain came down with Miss Ring singing "If You Like Us Don't Knock Us, and If You Don't Like Us Don't Knock Us," and everybody breathed a sigh and probably said just what we said—"Dear Blanche Ring."



Lew Fields

PHOTOS BY WHITE STUDIO



in "Blue Eyes"

in "Friendly Enemies"

An Actor Since Three, Santley Upholds Stage Life for Youngsters

If the Gerry Society expects to carry on a campaign against stage children without opposition, it has reckoned without Joseph Santley. That young actor hastens to the defence of the stage kiddie, offering not only his case but those of many other prominent players as arguments against the Gerry policies.

"The conditions governing stage work," says Mr. Santley, "differ greatly from those that prevail in the factory or the store, and, therefore, the theater cannot be regarded in the same light. Its people, for the most part, are men and women of education and breeding, and the environment in which the child lives and works can hardly be compared with that of the sweatshop."

"Some of the best known of present-day players," he continues, "were reared behind the footlights. To-day they own beautiful homes and are the heads of fine families. Maude Adams began her stage career as a child, and so did Ernest Truex, George M. Cohan, Wallace Eddinger, Mabel and Edith Taliaferro, Eddie Cantor and countless others."

"The modern theatrical youngster usually has its mother as a personal escort and in many cases a tutor as well. New York and other large cities boast schools especially devoted to the education of these youthful actors, many of whom have been personally improved since becoming professionals, as witness the manner in which Gus Edwards developed into high salaried players urchins he had picked off the streets."

Santley himself is representative of the American actor born upon the stage. The word "theater" is suspended from every branch of his family tree, and when he was three years old he made his debut as the little prince in "Richard III."

The Evolution of a Star Lew Fields

Unlike most New Yorkers, Lew Fields was born in this city, and it is here that his brilliant career in the theater began. And New York has been the scene of his highest accomplishments in the field of production as well as that of acting.

It was in travesty that he first won his public, and it is in travesty that he is still binding his audiences to him with the golden cords of laughter, for into his capable hands fall some of the most delightful comedy moments of the satirical skits which are woven into "Selwyn's Snapshots of 1921," the musical revue at the Selwyn Theater.

In Glen MacDonough's cleverly contrived "Hat Shop" number Mr. Fields employs the same broad brush to paint in the fun as the one he used in the old Weberfieldian days. The same thing may be said of his characterizations in "The Eternal Triangles," "The Children's Hour in a Modern Nursery," "Clara De Loon" and "Who Done It?"—all travesties on current plays and topics of the day. In these clever burlesques Mr. Fields fairly wipes out the years between 1896 and 1921, the former being the date of the first Weber & Fields Music Hall travesty on Broadway drama.

Aristophanes Period Of The American Theater

The opening burlesque sponsored by Weber and Fields was on "The Heart of Maryland," in which Mrs. Leslie Carter made an early success. The next travesty they presented was on "The Geisha" and known as "The Geizer," and this was followed by satires entitled "Under the Red Globe," "Pousse Cafe," "The Corn cutters," "Hurly-Burly," "Cyrane," "Catherine," "Helter-Skelter," "Zaza," "Whirl-i-gig," "Barbara Fidgety," "Fiddle-Dee-Dee," "Quo Vas Is?" and many others. In all of these Fields

and Weber appeared as the two German characters, which will be remembered as long as the famous Music Hall lives in the recollection of the public.

The company of players associated with Lew Fields in the heyday of the Weber-Fields travesty entertainments began as near the bottom of the ladder of fame as the two entertainers who tumbled out of variety into the music hall undertaking. It is interesting to recall them to-day in view of the fact that many to-day stars of magnitude and brilliancy. The aggregation included David Warfield, Lillian Russell, William Collier, De Wolf Hopper, Sam Bernard, Louis Mann, Fritz Williams, Charles J. Ross, John T. Kelly, Lee Harrison, Peter F. Dailey, Fay Templeton, Marie Dressler and other names which have since become famous on the stage. Of this original company tenanted the old Weber & Fields Music Hall, De Wolf Hopper alone is associated with Mr. Fields in the revue now on view at the Selwyn, although Nora Bayes appeared with Weber and Fields when they had their reunion in 1912, after a period of dissolved relationships. But this is getting a bit ahead of the story.

Mr. Fields's Ventures in Musical Comedy Field

The partnership between Weber and Fields was dissolved in 1904, when Mr. Fields formed a new relationship with Hamlin and Mitchell as his copartners. This firm opened the Lew Fields Theater—now the Frazee—with a musical comedy entitled "It Happened in Nordland," by Victor Herbert and Glen MacDonough. The following year saw a burlesque of "The Music Master" at the same theater. Then this playhouse in Forty-second Street was leased to James K. Hackett and Mr. Fields opened Lew Fields's Herald Square Theater with a show called "About Town." He retained the Her-

Midseason Novelties For Summer Crowds At the Resort Parks

Palisades Amusement Park announces a special attraction for this week in the repetition Tuesday and Thursday evenings of the fireworks display of last Monday. While pyrotechnics have been one of the features of this park ever since it was opened, the exhibition for this Fourth was much more elaborate than any other attempted. The chief effects comprise a fleet of battleships and a battle plane in action.

Community singing has been inaugurated at the Brighton Beach Baths, and is proving a popular feature of the resort. Circulars of the choruses of several songs are distributed to those on the beach and at an appointed time Stern's band sets things going.

A novelty for Coney Island will be found this week at Steeplechase Park, where the private beach has been used to stage a Honolulu Wai-ki on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. A Hawaiian concert orchestra has been engaged for the season, and the program for the opening evening will include the appearance of Honolulu dancing girls, who will give an interpretation of the famous dance of the Pacific.

aid Square for a number of years, making some of his best travesties hits there. It was in the Broadway Theater, which he later leased, that he made his productions of "The Midnight Sons," "The Jolly Bachelors," "The Hen-pecks," "Hanky Panky," "The Sun Dodgers" and other interesting musical shows.

Mr. Fields's jubilee reunion with Joe Weber occurred in 1912, presenting the new Weber and Fields music hall company, which included many players who were associated with them in their first music hall success. "Roly Poly" was the first production born of the reunion and the cast included, besides many of the oldtimers, Helena Collier, Jack Norworth, Frank Daniels,

in "Hands Up"

Vivian Martin on The Technique of Acting in Pajamas

Vivian Martin, who is featured with Lynne Overman in "Just Married," at the Shubert Theater, finds that there is a decided art in playing the rôle in pajamas. Miss Martin plays very nearly the whole of the second act in pajamas opposite Mr. Overman in B. V. Ds, and a draped sheet.

"I use a great many pajamas," says Miss Martin, "and I wear out many. They have to be made by a tailor under my direction. For in playing in pajamas one has to start with pretty pajamas if one is to retain the sympathy of the audience. The first difficulty is met right there. A woman in ugly pajamas or pajamas that didn't fit would be an object of contempt and the light fun of the scene in the state-room of the liner would be lost. I have with me in my dressing room every evening a competent sewing woman who is almost a tailor. She makes whatever last-minute alterations I find necessary before going on in the scene."

"As long as I can remain in bed in the scene I am not confronted with any great difficulty in the playing of it. But the action calls for me to get out of bed. Then I have to be very careful of my technique. In fact, I have to adopt a sort of pajama technique of acting. A woman's motions while she is wearing pajamas might very easily become ridiculous. So I have to be funny and at the same time graceful in a most unusual garment. Every motion I make I have carefully studied. At the same time I try to retain as much of the womanly in my bearing and gestures as possible. It is a strain, for while I am acting I must keep in my imagination a constant picture of how I look on the stage and how each motion alters my appearance. When the second act is over I find that I have been under an ordeal. It tires me more than any other part of the play."

"Yet I glory in the experience, because it has given me occasion to develop a technique of pajama acting."

Fame and prosperity have not made Miss Eastman forget the big baked potato, for at her farm on Long Island she raises and sells each year hundreds of bushels of potatoes. That is not all. She has developed the Eastman rose and ships them to the New York market. But she delights to recall just how big a part the big baked potato played in her success.

New Christie Comedy "Falling for Fanny" will be the fourth of the new series of Christie comedies distributed by Educational. Eddie Barry will be featured, with Helen Darling in support.

Marie Dressler, Nora Bayes, Bessie Clayton and Clifton Crawford. From time to time Mr. Fields has taken long flyers into musical comedy, of which "Blue Eyes" was the latest, but never has he been more successful than in travesty. His keen sense of humor and inimitable burlesque strokes are factors which always insure his instant popularity in satire.

Veiller to Direct Lytell Bayard Veiller is to direct Bert Lytell in his next Metro picture, "Lady Fingers," an adaptation by Lenore Coffey of a story by Jackson Gregory. Production will start as soon as "Junk," the picture on which Mr. Lytell is now working, is completed.

The Luck of a Baked Potato And a Girl

Being the True Story of Gretchen Eastman and Her Guest of the Stage

All fairy stories begin with "Once upon a time," so it is just as well to say "Not so long ago," as this is the true story of the adventures of Gretchen Eastman and her quest for a place on the stage.

Like many other little girls out in Chicago, Gretchen Eastman was set on going on the stage. The only difference between other girls and Miss Eastman was that she was not only set, but she was determined, to go on the stage, and she did it without saying anything to the family, who thought Miss Eastman should devote her time to preparing for a social career.

The social call did not appeal to the young lady, and one day she went to the La Salle Theater, in Chicago, and in her hands when she left was the manuscript part of the ingenue in "The Girl at the Gate." Being a thoughtful young lady, Miss Eastman made no mention of being in the cast, but on the opening night gave a theater party and invited her family, saying she would meet them at the playhouse, but to take their seats and not wait for her, as she would be there with some friends.

As the family party entered the theater, Miss Eastman was singing "You Can Flirt in All Kinds of Languages." Mrs. Eastman fainted in the aisle, but Miss Gretchen sang her song through. Just how she did it, the young lady admits she does not know, but thinks she was too frightened to stop.

Stuck to Her Job Through Eight Months' Run

At a family council it was decided that Miss Eastman would soon tire and leave the show. But she was in the cast for the entire eight months' run, and won her mother's engagement ring, as the family were so sure she would not remain that it was laughingly agreed Miss Eastman could have any present she asked if she was with the company during its entire run. The laugh, in this instance, was Miss Eastman's.

Then to school went the young lady, but the call of the stage was strong, and at a conference of friends Miss Eastman decided on a trip to New York. Not wishing to bother her family, she made the trip without making any announcement.

Thinking it necessary to be modest, Miss Eastman made the long trip on the slowest possible train and in an ordinary day coach. No sleepers or diners for her, and surely a diner was not necessary, as her schoolgirl friends had given her a large basket lunch of pickles, chocolates and cakes.

Arriving in New York, Miss Eastman thought it was time to make a fashionable start, so she selected the most expensive and exclusive hotel in the city. By the time she obtained an engagement the hotel had most of her funds.

A thoughtful stage director asked her at the first rehearsals if she was comfortable in her hotel and Miss Eastman confided in him the fact that, while delighted with the hotel, she was not content. Then followed the story of the large expense and the shrinking bank account. She was directed to another hotel where the charges were not so excessive.

Lived on One Potato a Day

Unwilling to ask the theater management for an advance, Miss Eastman found the question of paying for her room and eating a very serious one. One of the girls confided to her where a big baked potato and bread and butter could be had for a slight charge. For a time Miss Eastman lived on one meal a day, and that was the baked potato.

Since the baked potato days Miss Eastman has advanced in her profession. She was with Montgomery and Stone in "The Lady of the Slipper" and took the place of Elsie Janis when that young lady left the cast of "The Grass Widows" to entertain our soldiers. Then came two seasons in vaudeville as a headliner, and now she has been selected as one of the principals in "The Greenwich Village Follies, 1921," which will soon be presented.

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The Future of Pictures As Elmer Clifton Sees It

"The big coming American photoplays will deal with our national industrial life," says Elmer Clifton, the motion picture director. "Our industries are the backbone of our nation and if our screen drama is to catch the keynote of our life it must reflect this note of commerce and business."

"It seems to me radically wrong for our directors to attempt the historical spectacle, except where it concerns our country's past."

"We are essentially of to-day. And to-day in America represents industrial life and interests. We are the clearing house of the world. It is easy to see that this is our forte in motion picture literature."

"Let Europe and Continental film makers be concerned with dead things—with reproductions of the glamor of other days when their nations ruled supreme. We of America have our own interests and if our photoplay is to be a reflection of ourselves it must deal with these vital things of our to-day."